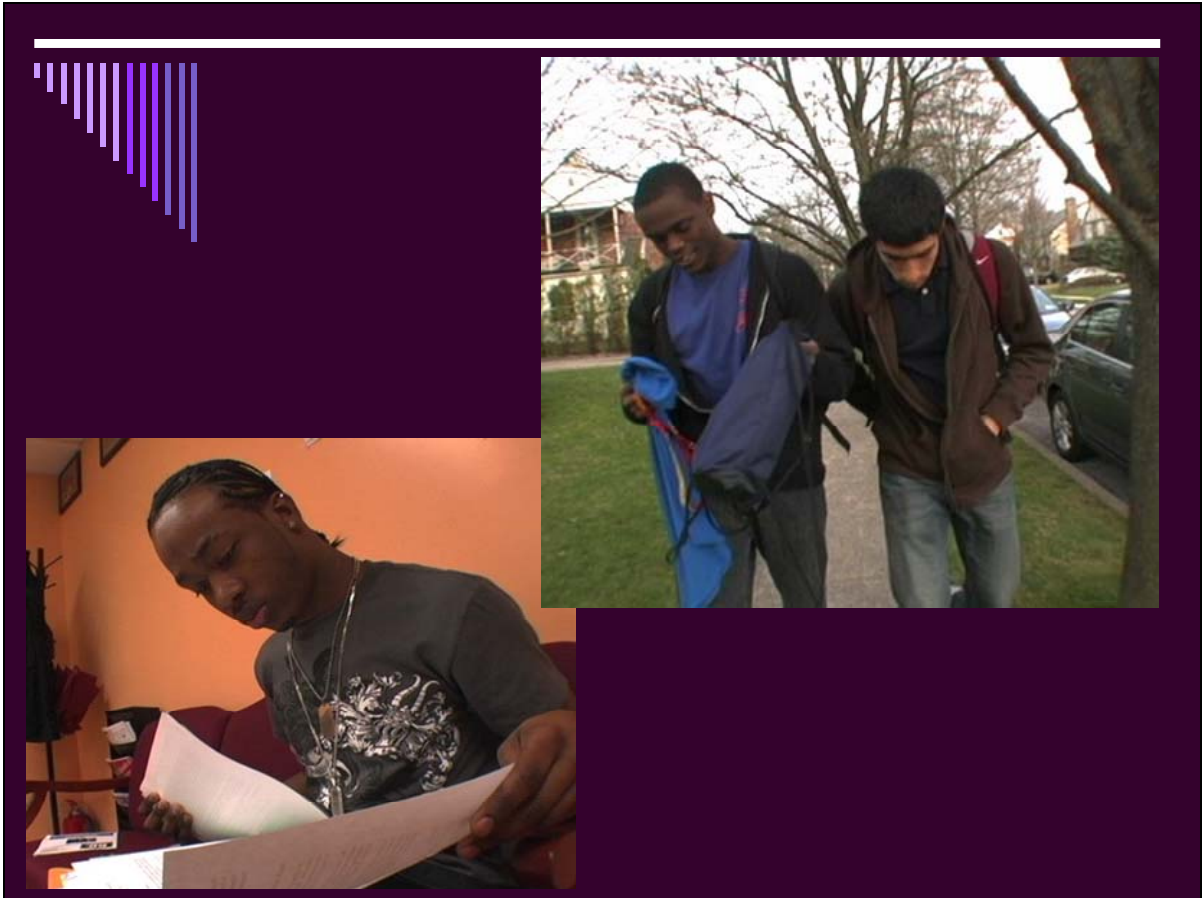




A TALE OF TWO SCHOOLS
Race and Education on Long Island

Slide 2

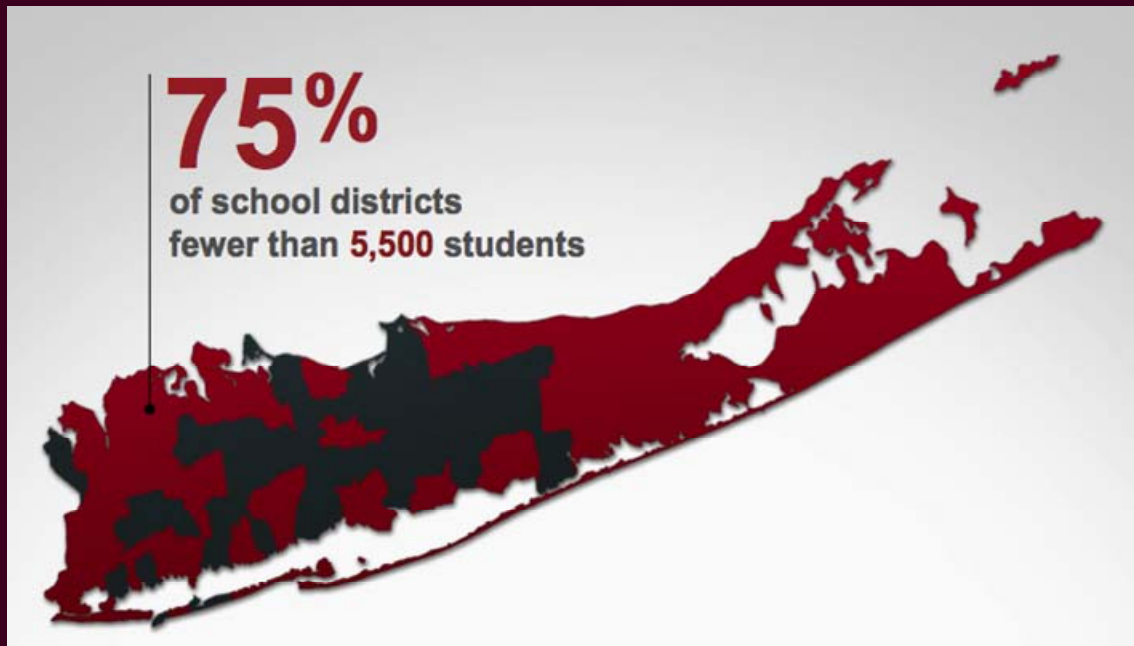


ERASE Racism's documentary, *A TALE OF TWO SCHOOLS: Race and Education on Long Island*, follows David and Owen, two African American teenagers during their senior year of high school. Even though the students have a lot in common, their experiences diverge as a result of the racial and economic differences in their schools districts. *A TALE OF TWO SCHOOLS* spotlights these differences and the results of such disparities. The film also focuses on the benefits that diversity provides for all students and makes the case for change.

**Long Island schools fail to
provide high quality education
to those students who need it
most.**

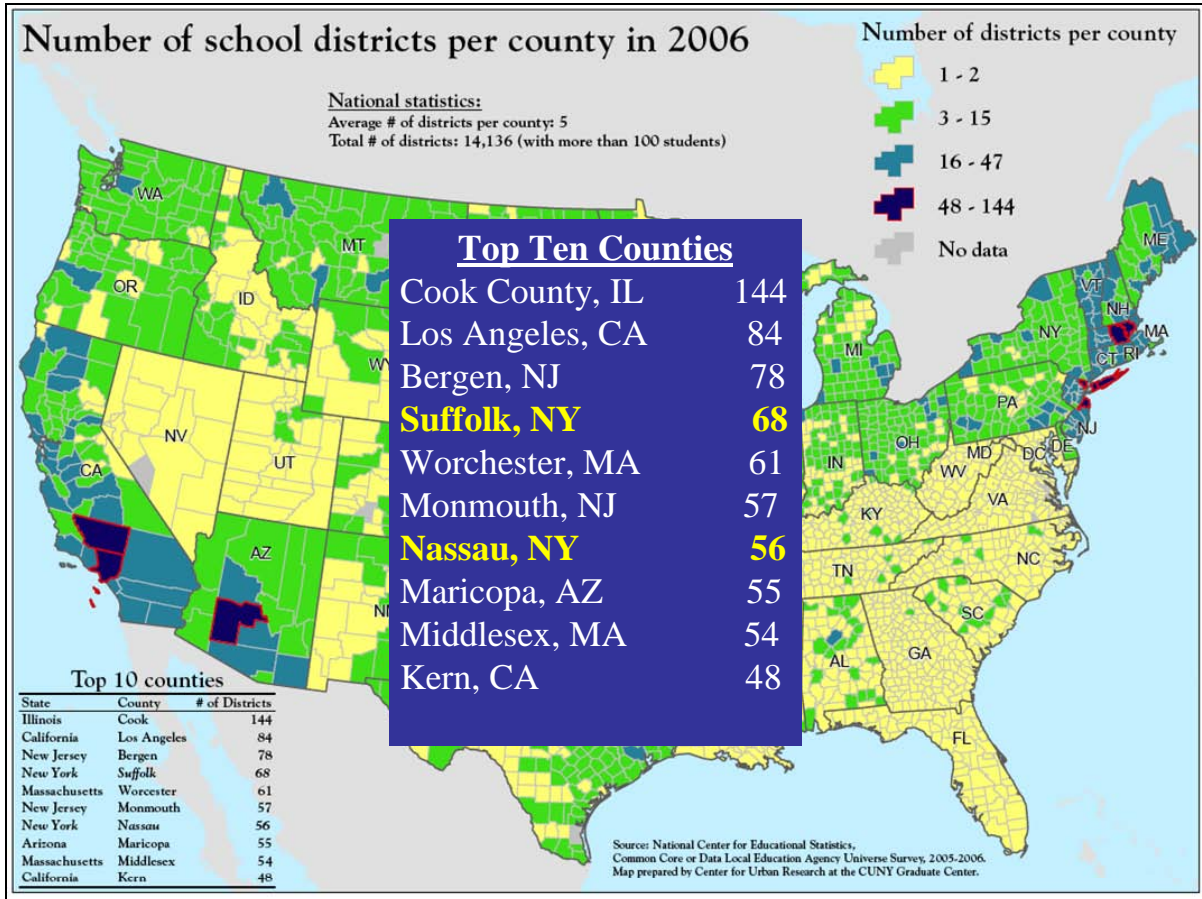
This presentation shows that the region is failing to provide the best education to all its students and offers solutions to improve Long Island's public schools.

Long Island's public schools are not using their funds effectively



A major key to the Island's long-term sustainability will be its ability to provide a quality education for all its young people at a cost which is affordable to taxpayers. Currently the region is burdened by some of the highest property taxes in the nation, the majority of which can be attributed to the school component. However for the amount that is spent on taxes, the quality of education should be much higher. Inefficiencies in school spending are largely the result of the region's segregated school districts. In comparison to the rest of the State, and the nation, Long Island is unusual, both in how many school districts it has and how economically segregated they are. As you will see, this drastically affects how Long Islanders are taxed, how that money is spent, and the resulting educational outcomes for the region.

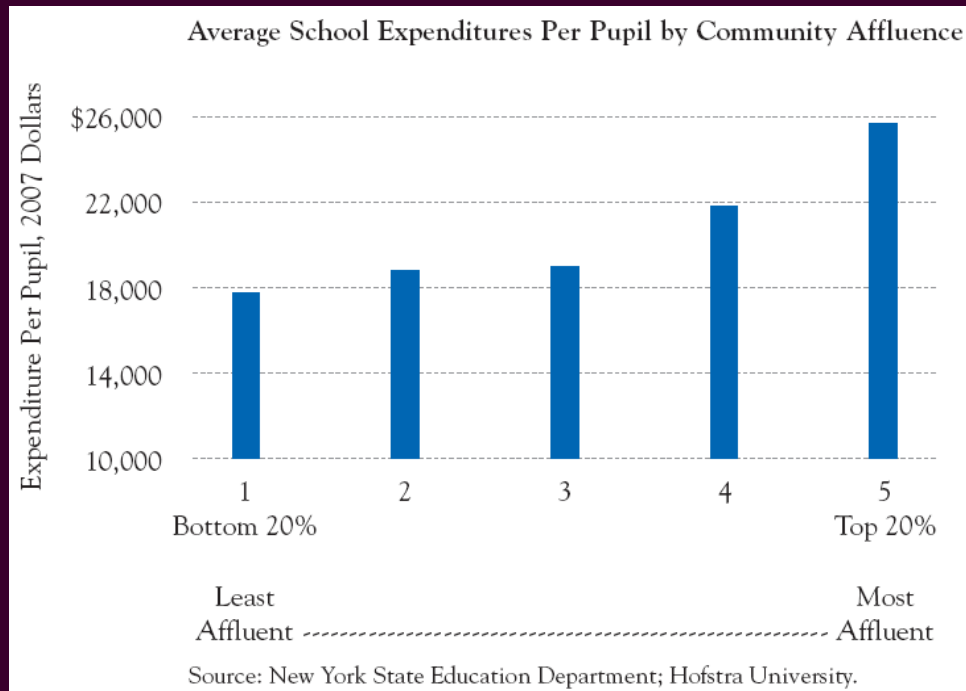
Slide 5



We currently have 124 school districts. Nassau contains 56 and Suffolk 68, placing them seventh and fourth—out of 3,066 counties in the nation—in the number of districts per county. Each of these 124 school districts acts as a completely autonomous taxing authority.

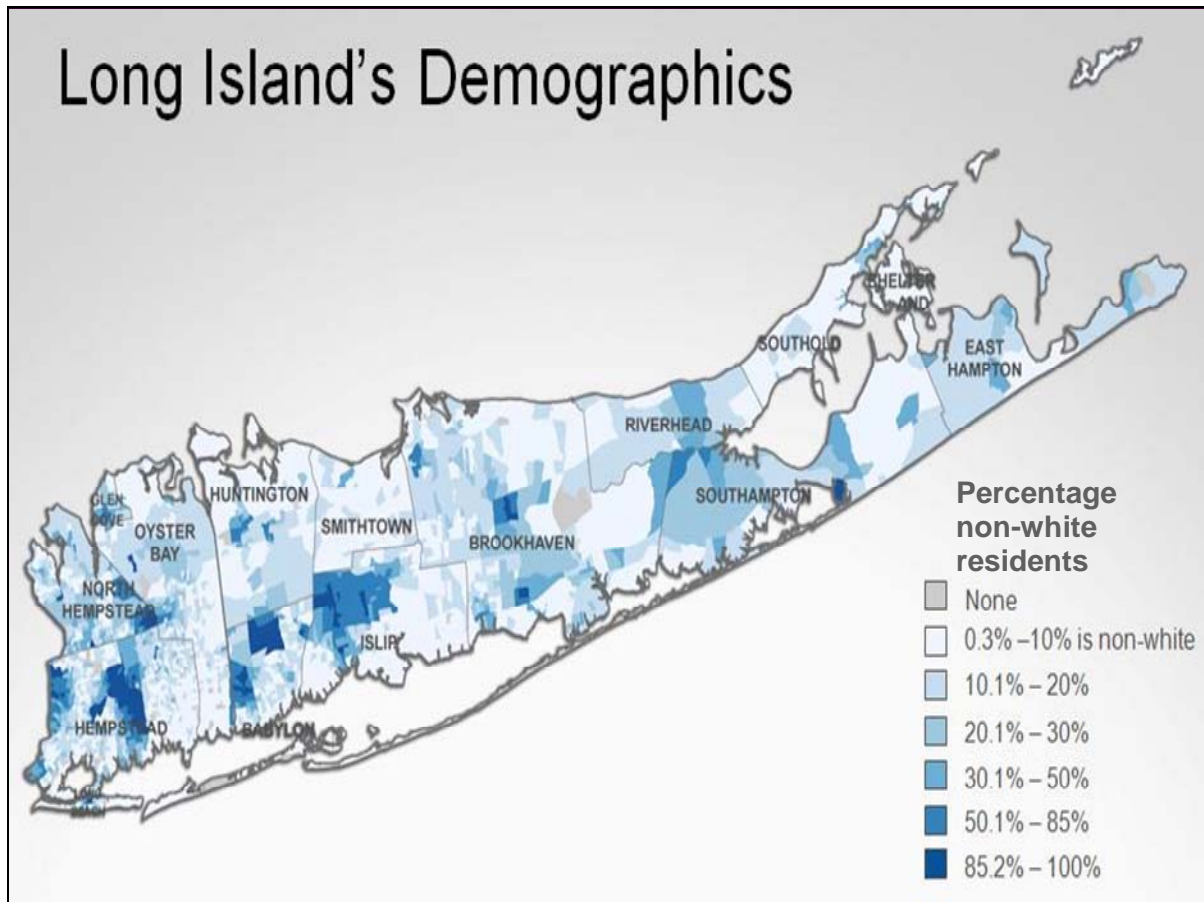
This makes it impossible to effectively allocate resources to meet the needs of every student.

Different Districts + Different Resources = Different Opportunities



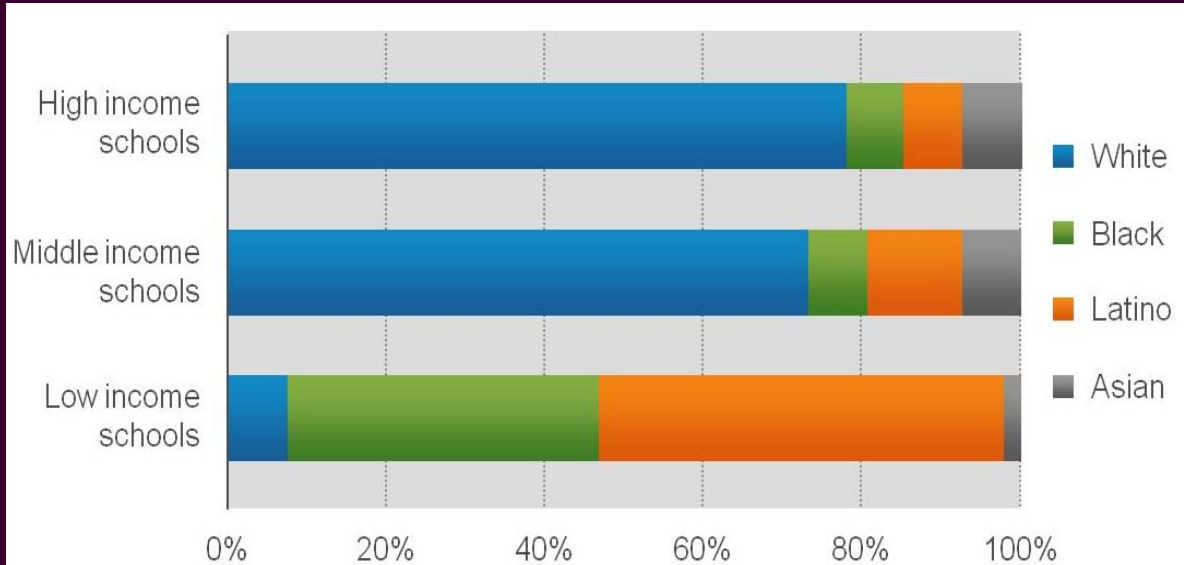
Vast differences in resources and funding cause greatly disparate educational opportunities across school districts.

On average, wealthier districts spend nearly \$8,000 more per student than poorer districts.




Long Island's school districts are also segregated by race. Many people would be surprised to learn that Long Island is the third most racially segregated suburban region in America.

Racial Composition



Our racially segregated neighborhoods produce racially and economically segregated classrooms. This means that black and Latino students are systematically denied access to well-funded schools and as a result are denied the opportunity for a high quality education.

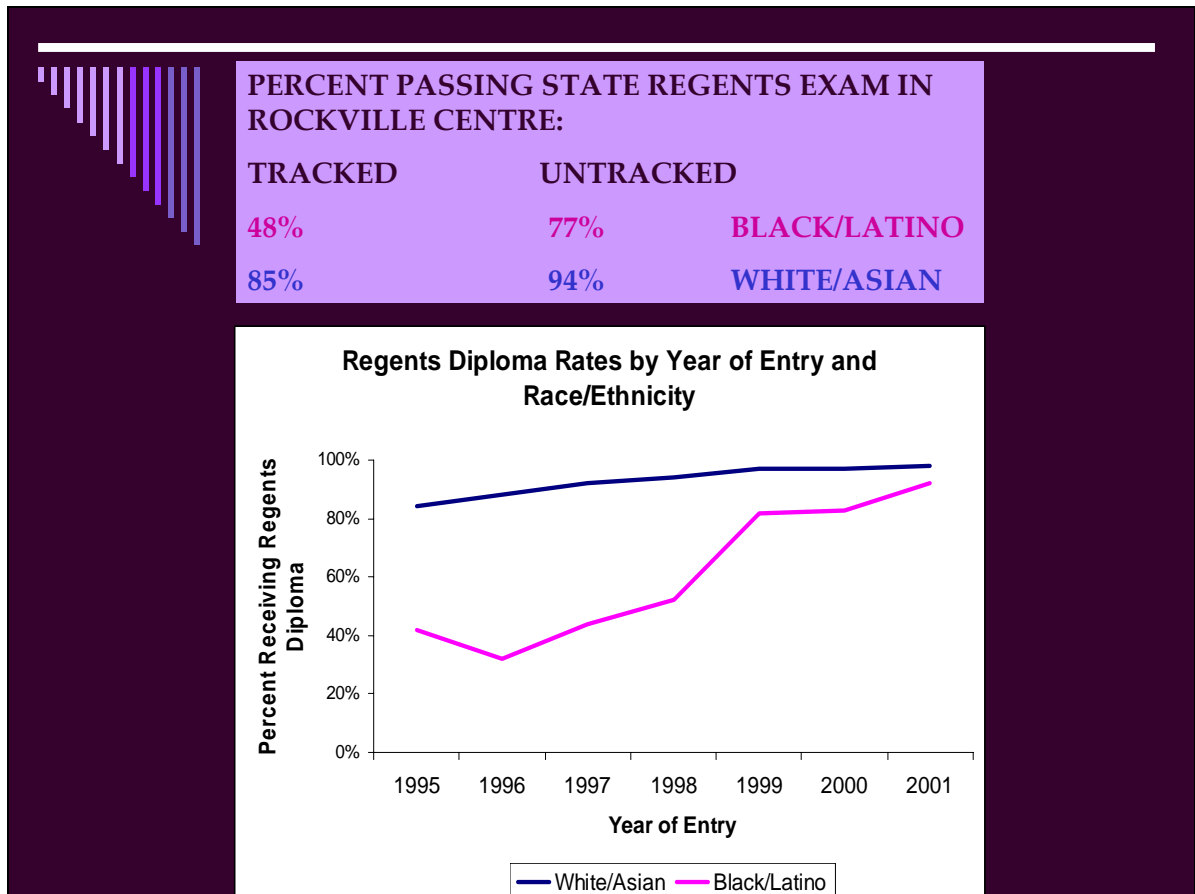


Racially & ethnically integrated settings

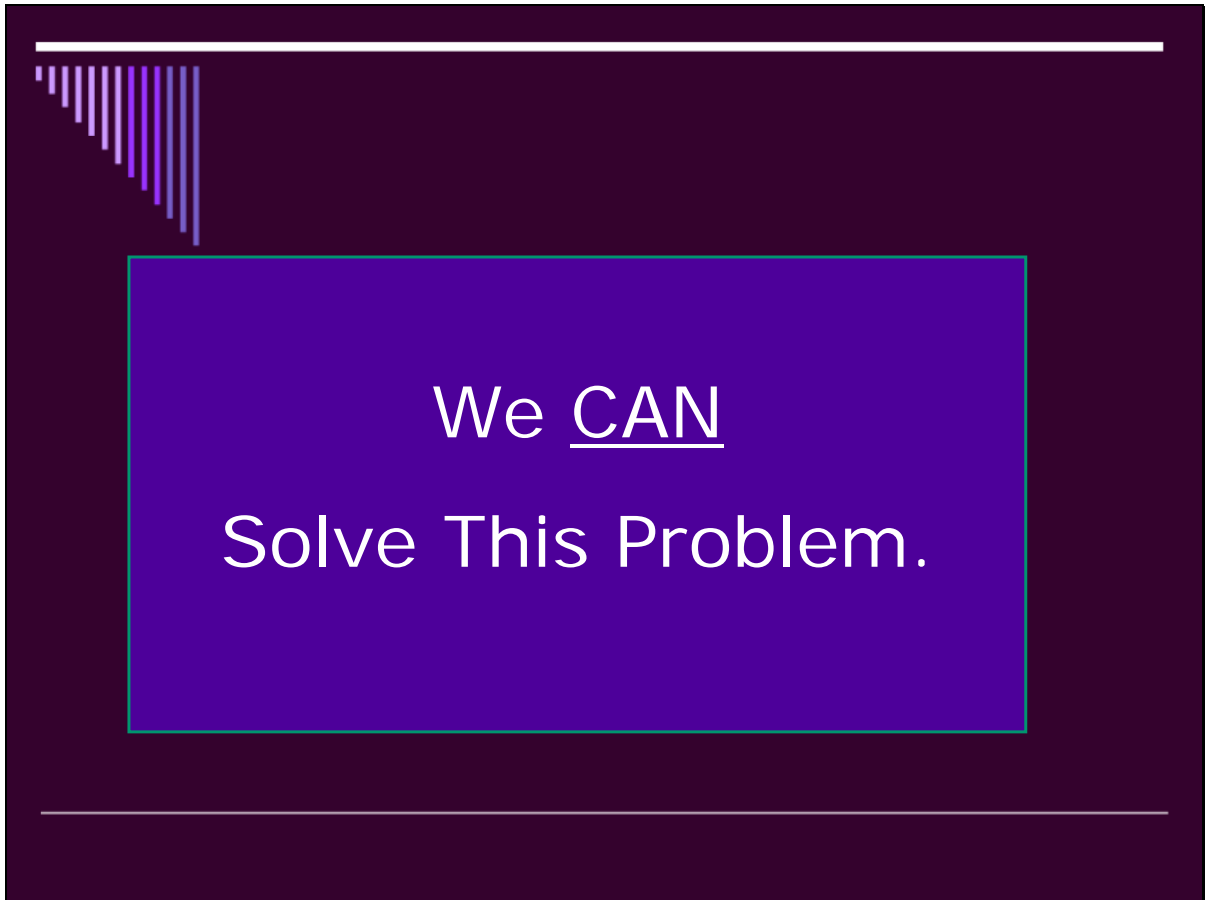
- Spark students into deeper, more critical thinking
- Prepare children to be citizens of a diverse society
- Undermine perpetuation of racial prejudices

-Effects of School Integration on K-12 Educational Outcomes: A Synthesis of Social Science Evidence, 2009, Mickelson

Scientific research confirms that all schools can greatly improve their quality of education by creating racially and ethnically diverse classrooms. Not only do racially diverse settings prepare students to be citizens in a diverse society, but study after study has shown that young people learn more and are more inclined to think critically.



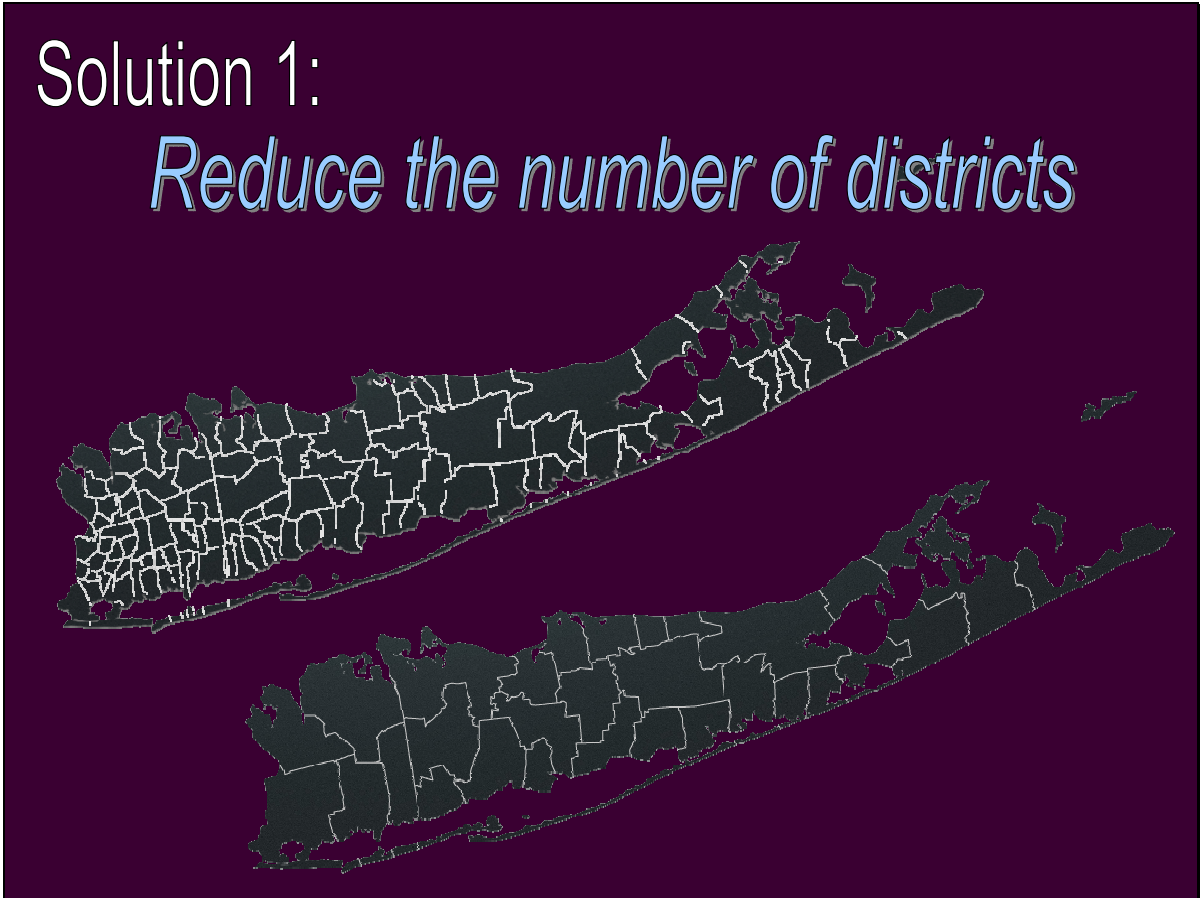
Research has shown that when classes are mixed by race and ability, all students benefit! In 2000, the last year biology classes were tracked in Rockville Centre, 48% of black and Latino students passed the State Regents exam, and 85% of white and Asian-American students passed the exam. In 2001, with heterogeneous classes and a more rigorous curriculum, the pass rate for blacks and Latinos shot up to 77%. What about the whites and Asian-Americans? They climbed to 94%.



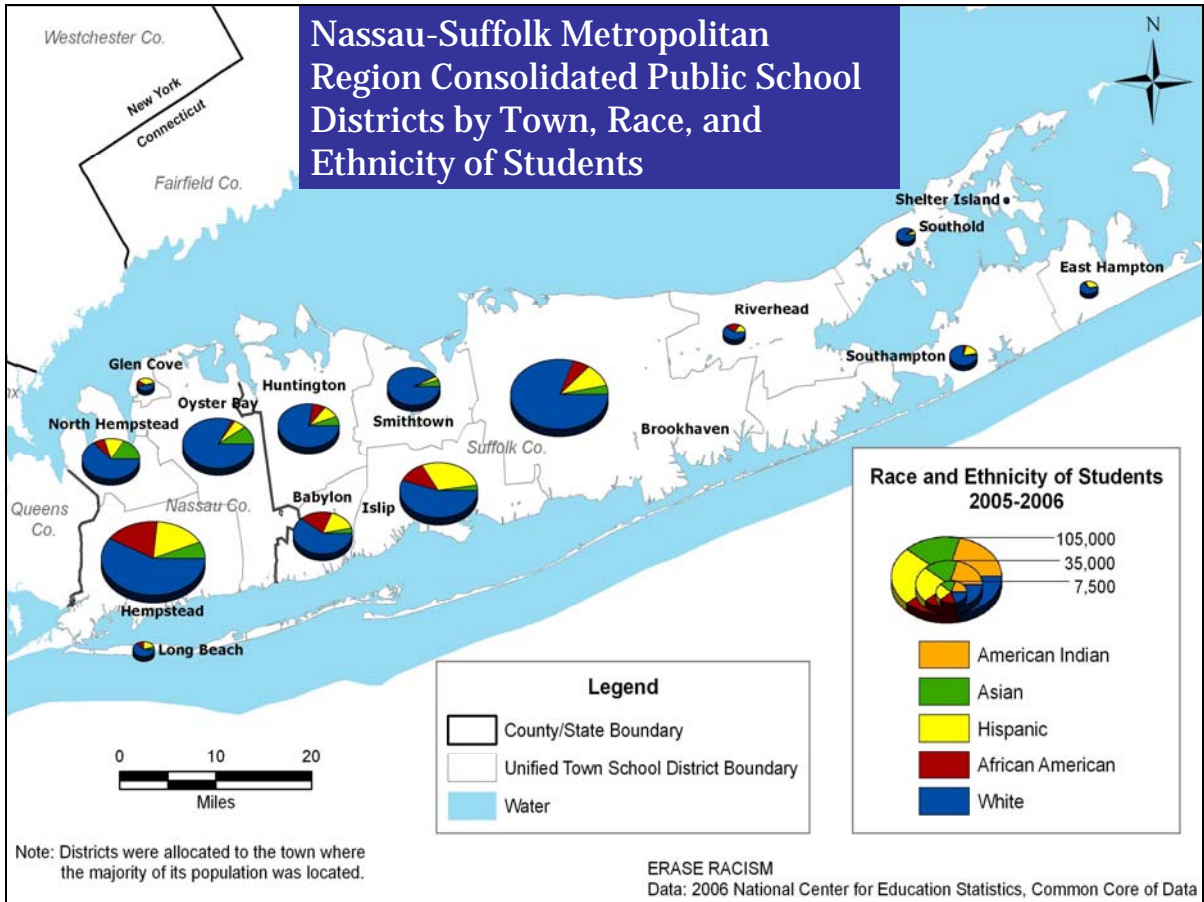
Long Island has the resources and ability to rethink our educational system in order to provide a top tier public education to every child. Here are some options.

Solution 1:

Reduce the number of districts



If districts followed town and city boundaries, none would have an overwhelming proportion of poor students and all would be racially diverse. Also, more resources would be available to target specific needs, which would allow schools to capitalize on economies of scale. Recently, local and state officials have proposed consolidating districts as a way to reduce school costs and taxes.



ERASE Racism examined the effect of uniting neighboring school districts as a way to optimize funds and create diversity. For example, if school district lines were redrawn along town and city lines, we could create a total of 15 districts, which would be far less segregated by race as well as income.

Solution 2: *Eliminate funding disparities*

Example: Pool Commercial Property Taxes

Homeowners in districts with commercial development, pay as low as 29% of the school district tax levy, while those in districts without commercial properties can shoulder more than 90%.

-LI Index, 2009 Report

Eliminating funding disparities between districts will help ensure that all students in Long Island can afford the educational resources needed to obtain a quality education. This is also a good strategy to transition to fewer districts.

One option is to alter the school tax funding system. For example, we can pool commercial taxes from large regional businesses. This would help eliminate the homeowners' tax burden in communities with a small number of commercial properties.

Solution 3: *Support models of successfully integrated schools*

Example: Create Magnet Schools

- Integrated by race and socio economic background
- Admissions offered to students across boundary lines
- Offer in-depth instruction in science, math, or the arts

As shown in A TALE OF TWO SCHOOLS DOCUMENTARY, Rockville Centre is one example of a successfully integrated school by race and socio economic status. Other options include creating magnet schools that offer admission to students across boundary lines. These high-standard schools greatly benefit students in districts that lack the resources to offer in-depth instruction in science, mathematics, or the arts, allowing students to develop their strengths, no matter what that strength may be.

Solution 4: *Enhance educational opportunities for students in low performing schools*

Example: Inter-district transfer programs

Seven regions across the country promote educational opportunity through Voluntary Inter-District Transfer programs.

-LI Index, 2009 Report

A study of Boston's METCO program found that academic achievement for the transfer students closely mirrored the high achievement of the suburban students.

-LI Index, 2009 Report

Through the use of creative collaborations, students in under achieving schools can receive enhanced educational experiences today by using existing structures like BOCES to bring qualified teachers and others resources to the students while larger structural changes are underway. Another option is allowing students to attend schools in highly resourced districts through a transfer program. Historically inter-district transfer programs have allowed students from struggling urban schools to attend schools in nearby suburban districts. The programs are voluntary for both the transferring students and the receiving schools. Since a rigorous curriculum is taught to all students, inter-district transfer programs provide students from under-resourced schools with the opportunity to achieve academic success.

Solution 5: *Provide stability in school governance*

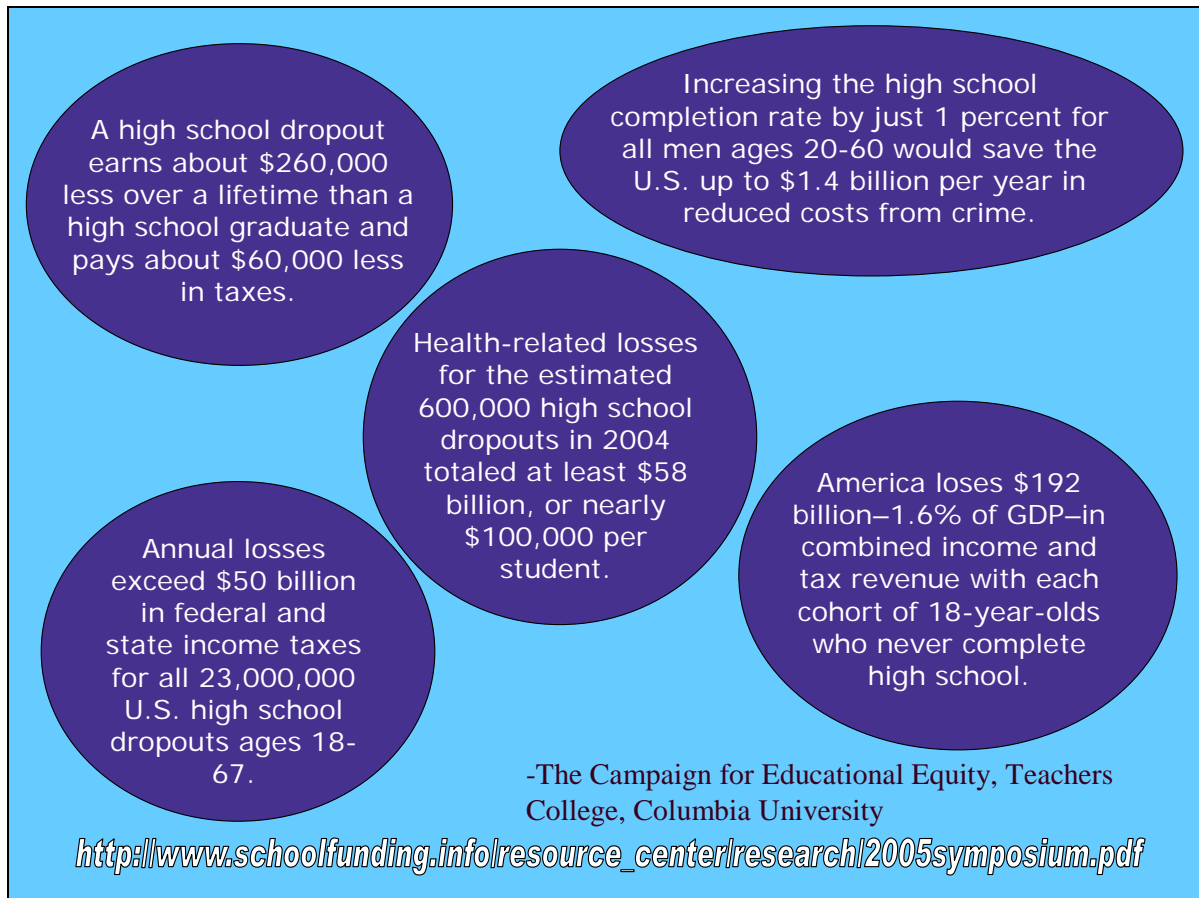
Example: application of a “Distinguished Educator”

- An experienced educational consultant is assigned to every school
- S/he helps the board operate effectively
- S/he holds veto power and can influence decisions about school governance
- S/he helps school transition between administrative personnel if need be

The State Education Law has a “Distinguished Educator” provision that can be utilized to help school boards operate effectively. A regionalized employment structure, which includes regional collective bargaining for school district employees may achieve cost savings and equitable access by all school districts to the most qualified and experienced personnel.



The social and economic costs
of inadequate education are
very high



Americans with inferior and incomplete educations are more likely to be unemployed, unhealthy, and incarcerated. They have the potential to improve the economy and ease tax burdens if they receive at least a high school education, and will help contribute to our society to an even greater extent with a college degree.

“Equal educational opportunity means that all children (and the public schools that serve them) have access to those resources, inputs, and services necessary to...achieve established outcome goals.”

-Education Law Center (ELC)

There are better ways!

Long Island cannot thrive as a region without a quality and affordable public education system that offers an equal opportunity for success to all students, regardless of race, socio-economic status, community resources or learning abilities.

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| TAKE ACTION | Inform Educate yourself | Engage Join the conversation | Act Volunteer |
|------------------------|-----------------------------------|--|-------------------------|

Visit our website on ways to explore all of these options: eraseracismny.org

There are many ways to take action, but one of the first steps is voicing your opinion. We want to hear from you. Please send your emails to education@eraseracismny.org

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